

TV personality lifts glass (of milk) in salute to the dairy industry

by Renae Killion

With a unique style all his own, Orion Samuelson toasted milk to kick off his speech at the Sioux River Dairy farm on Dairy Day 1995.

"It's the only drink that has the decency to turn sour when it's not fit to drink," Samuelson said.

The television agriculture celebrity was late because of plane trouble and the windy conditions. The annual event was held on the Marvin and Jim Czech dairy farm south of Watertown last Thursday.

Samuelson began by talking about the tough spring weather the area had this year. With all the flooding during the spring, many farmers have yet to plant some crops. Now already, predictions are coming out for a drought for the rest of the summer.

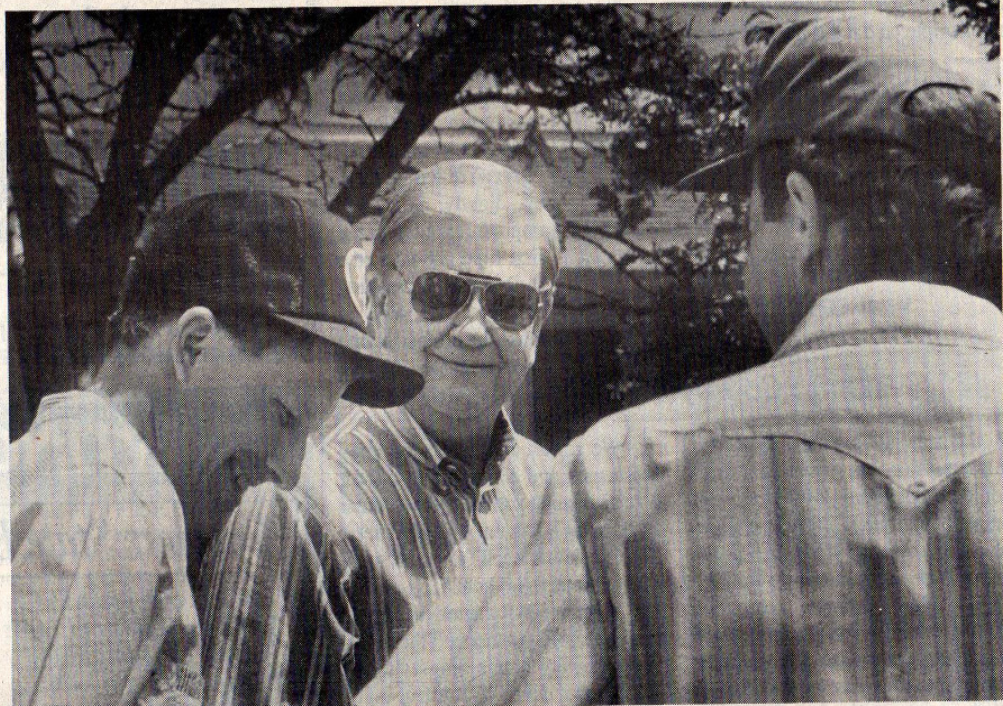
"That proves again that in agriculture, for sure, nothing is ever certain," he said.

Samuelson went on to explain some things about markets and the best ways and times to market crops and livestock. He advised farmers on the best and worst times to sell, as well as avoiding greed by leaving room in the markets for the other guy. Another hint was to let your wife do the marketing since she isn't as connected to the crops and livestock as the husband often is.

"It's important to market with a science, not by the seat of your pants."

The main thrust of Samuelson's pants."

The main thrust of Samuelson's speech was discussing the 1995 Farm Bill. He has had the opportunity to meet with the new Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and was instantly impressed by him. He has the ability to communicate and articulate, and he answers questions well. Furthermore he has past



TV personality Orion Samuelson talks with local farmers during Dairy Day 1995 at the Sioux River Dairy farm owned by Marvin and Jim Czech located north of Castlewood. Samuelson was the featured speaker for the event. (Photo by Renae Killion)

experience working with farm bills.

"Finally we have someone back in that office who is not going to back down when it comes to sticking up for agriculture," Samuelson said.

There are two things that Samuelson would like to see in the 1995 Farm Bill. The first is that the government concentrate more heavily on exports. That is where the market is for agriculture. The market needs to be expanded since government checks for agriculture. The market needs to be expanded since government checks to aid farming are sure to be cut.

The second thing he would like to see is to provide funding for the entrepreneurial side of agriculture, such as ethanol production. He would like to see co-ops of farmers and ranchers come together to bring the entire chain of an industry to their own area to

provide jobs and better prices. The big monopolizing companies would have some challenge then, and farmers would have the strength and the power. However, this approach takes money and time.

Samuelson also made his feelings known about some environmental groups who are making the farmers life more difficult. He receives hundreds of horror letters every year from farmers all over the country.

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"We do have to work harder at preserving the environment and improving its quality. Farmers have been environmental conservationists far longer than a lot of people who just suddenly discovered that there's a word called conservation. Property rights are being eroded in the name of

endangered species, in the name of conservation, in the name of the environment."

According to Samuelson, the farmers who conserve the soil need to let the government know what is the best thing for the future of farming. This can be done through the farm bill. One message that he believes should be made clear in the farm bill is the relationship between American farmers and

between American farmers and other farmers around the world.

"The American farmer and rancher is not only able to feed all of us in this country better than we deserve to be fed, but millions of others around the world. Maybe it's time to look for a new direction in agriculture," he said.